

'87 looks like golden year for Eagles

By Roger Boye

The new year portends continued thrills for coin and currency buffs, thanks in large part to Uncle Sam. Here's what to watch for in 1987:

- Continued American Eagle mania: Federal officials promise to make huge numbers of gold and silver Eagles in 1987—the bullion program's first full year—in an ongoing effort to placate worldwide demand. Gold-coin production likely will exceed 10 million pieces by the end of 1987, and silver Eagle production could total at least 15 million coins.

- Two new coin types: Under federal law, the U.S. Treasury can issue up to 10 million freshly designed silver dollars and one million gold pieces—all dated 1987—to commemorate the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution.

Advance sales might begin next spring, but profits probably won't match the levels reached this year by Statue of Liberty coinage.

Since November 1985, the federal government has sold more than 13 million Statue commemoratives, raising nearly \$75 million to help pay for repairs to the Statue and to Ellis Island. That program ends Wednesday when mint directors halt distribution of the coins.

- U.S. "greenbacks" with anti-counterfeiting devices: By year's end, the banking system will have circulated millions of series 1987 Federal Reserve notes with microprinting around the center portraits and with a clear polyester thread embedded into the paper.

Government workers are to begin producing new \$50 and \$100 notes in January and will begin printing new \$1 notes by late 1987.

The subtle changes are designed to make U.S. currency more difficult to duplicate.

- A small Canadian dollar: In July Canada plans to issue new dollar coins, which probably will replace \$1 paper notes by 1990. Canadian officials appear undeterred by the failure of Susan B. Anthony dollars to circulate in this country several years ago.